

NEWS RELEASE

January 18, 2006

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GREAT SALT LAKE EYESORE RECLAIMED

A joint project of the Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining and Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands has concluded with the plugging of 15 holes and the removal of tons of junk from the Rozel Point area on the shore of Great Salt Lake.

“Rozel Point is a historic area,” explained Dustin Doucet, petroleum engineer and project manager for the Division of Oil, Gas and Mining. “There are natural oil seeps in this area that people have attempted to exploit for many years, in fact it’s believed Captain Howard Stansbury was referring to Rozel Point when he reported evidence of petroleum during his survey of the lake in 1850.”

Attempts to develop the resources at Rozel Point went through cycles up through the early 1980s when the last wells were drilled in the area. Similarly, attempts have been made in the past to clean up the site, but high water levels prevented completion.

“Anyone who has made the trip to see the famous Spiral Jetty in Great Salt Lake has passed through the area and certainly noted that it was an eyesore,” said Joel Frandsen, director of the Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands. “As the agency responsible for the lake bed we are particularly pleased to see this project completed.”

Doucet approached the Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands a little over two years ago to start the project while lake water levels were low. Funding was secured from the legislature and through a 2-mil levy paid by operators on the production of oil and gas. A portion of that tax is set aside each year for what is known as the “orphan well” program. The contract was awarded to Remediation Technologies, LLC, to do the work.

The project began on December 5, 2005, and concluded on December 31. Eighteen loads of junk were removed from the lake bottom and causeway, in addition to the plugging of the wells.

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